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A NOTE ON THE GREAT CHALICE OF ANTIOCH

WITH regard to the remarkable relic, described by Dr. G. A. Eisen in *A.J.A.* XX, 1916, p. 426, I would offer the following note. The theme of the vine, which so beautifully decorates the exterior of the chalice, is of course an appropriate symbolism for the eucharistic cup. But further it is in striking correspondence with and in illustration of the opening sentence in the Eucharistic Prayer in the *Didache* (9, 2), which reads as follows: *Εὐχαριστοῦμέν σοι, πάτερ ἡμῶν, ὑπὲρ τῆς ἁγίας ἀμπέλου Δαβὶδ τοῦ παιδὸς σου*. This reference to the "Vine of David" is, as the commentators note, mystical, and may refer to the Church, to Christ himself as the Vine, and, as on our chalice, to the eucharistic wine. As the *Didache* is without doubt Syrian, according to some Antiochian, and of first century origin, the chalice pictures the opening theme of the Eucharistic Prayer used by the primitive Church in that region and in the same age, for Dr. Eisen attributes the relic also to the first century.

I would further suggest that the whole symbolism of the design is Jewish, and that it is specifically drawn from the 80th Psalm, with its parable of the Vine, which is Israel. This suggests itself to me from the representation in Figure 1 of a beast at the foot of the design, probably referring to v. 13 of that Psalm: "The wild boar out of the wood doth ravage it." Possibly also the sheep beside the figure of the Lord may represent the opening theme of the Psalm: "Thou, Shepherd of Israel, that ledest Joseph like a sheep." But the symbol of the Lamb of God may be more patent, except that otherwise no symbols are used with the figures. A further Jewish trait may be found in the twelve figures, of which two represent the Lord, as a youth and as a man, so that they do not stand for the twelve Apostles. But they may represent the twelve Tribes, for according to ancient tradi-

tion Christ was descended from both the tribes of Judah and Levi, the latter through his mother. In subsequent apocrypha there were many attempts, *e.g.* in Syriac and Ethiopic literature, to identify the Apostles with the twelve Tribes.

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January 20th, 1917.